

A Strange and True
RELATION
Of the Prodigious Multitude of
M I C E,

That have Destroyed the PLANTS,
HERBS, and GRASSE, between
ROTTERDAM and SCHEDAM;
As it was Communicated to a Person of Qualitie,
by a Letter from a Merchant living in ROTTERDAM.

Likewise,
Infesting their Houses and Chambers,
In somuch that the Inhabitants thereof
are in despair of their Security.

VVherein you will find a Philosophical and Historical Relation concerning the Generation of those Vermine, and some Prognosticks raised therefrom.

As also,
An Account how Dengy Hundred in Essex
hath been formerly Infested with an incredible
number of MICE; And how it was freed after
a Miraculous manner.

Printed, Anno Domini, 1670.

24277.26 *



Hetheridge *fixed*

(1)

A Letter to a Friend.

Worthy Sir,

TO satiate your curiosity, knowing you to be delighted with all News; but more especially with that of Prodigies: witness your kind acceptance of my Letters to you upon the apparition of the Comets. I shall now give you an account of a Prodigious Army of Mice, that have lately invaded us, and have possessed themselves of Rotterdam, Schevening, and many other places; their manner of Invasion was as followeth. About the beginning of this November, there was observed by the Inhabitants near to the Maes, whole shoals of living Creatures swimming towards the Shore; at first they were supposed to be small Fish flying to the shore for their security, being pursued by some ravenous Birds that sought to devour them; but it proved quite otherwise: for these supposed Water animals proved to be ~~Water~~ Mice creatures of the nature of Crocodiles, that can live in boisterous Elements. They were no sooner landed, than they, without asking leave, set to tearing and rooting up Grass, Planes, and what ever came in their way, saving the Poor Dough-men's labour by turning up the Gras, and making that which was before Pasture, good arable Ground, well cleanse and freed from Weeds; whether the Countrymen do account these courtesies, I cannot tell: but their number makes them so undaunted, that they neither fear their own strengths, nor fearing an Army of Cats against them, nor care for being tried at Law for Treasons: I do declare, notwithstanding Pres. Quareer, and are of that generous and good Nature, that they never quarrel with their Landlords, but are well contented with what they find in the House. At their first coming they took up their Quarters in the Fields, but now they have left off their Field-Quarters, and are com-

into our Towns, obseruing the common custom of Armies, to Summer in the Fields, and Winter in the Cities. The reason of this Prodigy hath been controverted by all persons, whose Ingenuity leads them to a Scrutiny of things of this nature, as well Divines, Physicians, Lawyers and Astrologers.

The Divines conclude it to be a severe Judgement of God upon that Countrey, for the *States* tolerating all sorts of wickedness, under pretence of tolerating all sorts of Religions,

The Mathematicians are of the opinion that it is a Judgement of God, but they will have the Cause of it, to be, not the tolerating of Religion, but their too much encroaching upon *Neptune's* Bounds; and it's feared by many, that these Creatures being so numerous, they may in time eat down the Banks, and give liberty to the Sea, to re-assume that which is its undoubted right.

The Opinion of the Physicians, is, that appearance of these strange Bodies in the Body-Politick, are certain Diagnosticks of some strange Malignant Distemper to happen; But coming to consider what particular Distemper it might be that should afflict the Countrey; One of the Company desired to have a sight of the *States* water, But that would not be granted at that time; But it was thus concluded concerning the particular Distemper: that in regard of those dangerous Symptomes that do now appear, as the Generation of strange Bodies, denotes a great Putrefaction of the Humours, the Ulceration and Corroion of the interior parts, and the increase of the Animals, do argue some foul Disease, It is much to be feared that the Countrey this year will *sub Merbo Gallico laborare*, as a nimble witted fellow amongst them, supposing that it might be meant, that the *French* would invade the Land; answered, there was no fear of the *French* coming amongst them, since the *Mice* had so devoured the Plants, that they could not pick one *Sallet* in the Countrey,

The Lawyers coming to consider what might be the events of this Prodigy : Some determined ; saying , that they were Prodigious Trespassers ; and in regard they lie skulking in holes and corners, and will not be taken by the lawful Process of a Trap, they ought to be sued to an Outlawry,

The Astrologers have been a great while Calculating the Nativity of this Prodigie rectifying it by the Trutine of *Hermes, Animodar, of Ptolemy*, and by accidents, which they say is the surest way of Rectification ; But as yet they cannot find the *Apbara, Alcocoden, or Anarea* of this Prodigie ; so that it may be supposed that these *Mice* may prove a greater *Flagellum Astrologorum* ; then ever *Picus* of *Mirandula* was , or *Lillies Gold Chain*. They have put out a Book, which they call *Nuncius Astralis*, or an account of the reasons of the Generation of *Mice*, according to the Rules of *Astrology*, of their Progress and Declination of several Prognostications raised therefrom, Predicting the present and future condition of *Holland*, and the several Accidents, whether good or bad, that shall happen to that State for Twenty years to come . By the next Pacquet you may expect the Book, which you may think worth your Reading. In the meantime take this short account.

First, they tell us, that the estimate time of this Prodigious Birth , was when the Sun entred *Scorpio*, a venomous watry Sign ; and from this they conclude , that they were bred in the water, and have venomous teeth , because Grass, nor any thing else grows where they have once been. And about the same time *Jupiter* did oppose *Mars*, and squared *Sol*, and the *Moon* was in opposition to *Saturn*, they do Predict from hence, that in regard that *Jupiter* is Significator of Lawyers and Divines : And *Mars* the general Significator of Soldiers , that there may be many Controversies , Quarrels , Fightings, Duels between those of the Long Robe, and the Buff-Coats ; Then *Jupiter* squaring *Sol*, doth shew that the Soldier will have the better o'nt at the Sword , and the Lawyer at his Tongue ; the *Moon* in opposition to *Saturn*, doth

doth plainly shew, that old Men will have the worst of it, if they deal with young Women, *Saturn* being the significator of old Men, and the *Moon* crescent of young Women. From all these aforesaid Aspects, with other Transits, Revolution, Professional Figures, *Speculums*, *Radices*, with many more hard words, which you will find in their Book; They do conclude, that *malum principium, malu finū sequitur*, the Consequences will be very Bad and Ominous, a Grand *Catastrophe* will happen either to the *States*, or some other Persons; But what these Consequences are, they tell you, it is not safe to discover the Politick Secrets of the Nation; They intend therefore to see the Event, and then they will explain their Prognostications, and tell you, They did Predict all those things that have happened, as *Lilly* Predicted the Kings Restoration by these words in his *Merlin's Prophecies*; *A Grand Catastrophe shall happen in England between the Years 1655, and 1665, in 10 Years over or under*; Though in the same Book and Place, be saith positively the contrary.

Thus having tired your Patience with Mens Opinions; I will come now to the Matter, and give you an account how great a trouble these inconsiderable Animals, whose number being considerable, makes them formidable,

They destroy all our Provision, knawing holes through V.Vood, Cloath, &c. so that nothing can preserve our Bread, or other Provision from them, but Iron; And therefore many of our Inhabitants are fain to provide Cupboards made of Iron Plate; They do so increase, that we begin to fear they will devour us, as well as our Food; they being already so bold, as to come upon our Beds, and sometimes bite us by the Toes, or Fingers. Great Care is taken for their Destruction, but all in vain, by Traps, Cats, Dogs, all signifies nothing.

There came a *V. ruse* from *Paris* the other day, that undertakes to free the Town by a *Talisman*; which startled the Burgo Masters of *Rotterdam*, supposing it to be the name of some Infernal Spirit, till such time as he explained himself, and told them, that it was *my* the *Effigie* of a *Mouse* Engraven upon Iron; (being demanded why upon Iron, rather than any

any other Metal's He answered.) Because the Sun entred *Scorpio* (which is *Mars's* winter House) when the *Mice* entered the Land; it must be Engraved in the hour of *Mars*: afterwards it must be heated nine times upon a *Tuesday* in the hour of *Mars*, and quenched with the juice of *Martial* Plants, impregnated with *Sal Martinis*, then there must be a Stone gathered under the Dominion of *Venus*, when *Venus* is well fortified in her own Dignities (Be sure she be not in Conjunction with *Mars*, for then she will part with no Influencies to the Stone) Upon this must be Engraved a *She-Mouse* in the hour and day of *Venus*, and this Stone must be made red hot nine times, and quenched as often in the juice of *Venerial* Plants, impregnated with *Ens Veneris*. These being prepared, this *Versus* intends to hang this *Talismanical* Stone about the neck of this *Talismanical* Mouse, and throw them both into the *Mare*, which will by an occult quality, and sympathetical virtue draw all the other *Mice* to the bottom of the River to them. The *Burgo-Masters* at length approve of the Art, and desired him to hasten the experiment.

But since this, there hath been another Project thought on for freeing the Town.

A *German*, who it seems, was born in the Town where the *Pide Piper* whistled the *Rats* and *Mice* out of the Town, and drew them into the River, doth affirm, That not long since, the *Pipers* Tomb was discovered by digging for some Mine, and in it was found the very Pipe, which hath been proved since by the same Experiment, making all the *Rats* and *Mice* in the Town to follow him that played upon it. This *German* undertakes to procure this Pipe for a sum of Money, and so to free us from these Vermine. The *Papists* are very importunate with their *Priests* to Excommunicate them; and it is discoursed amongst them, that they have sent to the Pope for a Bull to scarr them all away,

We have no other News or Discourse here, but concerning the *Mice*. I remember a Story that I have read in *England* of the like Prodigy in *Essex*, which put us in some comfort of being freed after some such miraculous manner; The Story was thus,

About

About November in the year 1581, in the Marshes of Dersie Hundred, in a place called Southminster, in the County of Essex, there suddenly appeared an Infinite and Prodigious number of Mice, which almost covered the whole Superficies of the said Marshes, treading and knawing the Grass by the Roots, spoiling and tainting the same with their venomous teeth, in such sort, that the Cattle that grazed thereon, were struck with a Murrain, and many dyed thereof; which Vermin by all the Policie of Man could not be destroyed, till at last, it came to passe, that there flocked together all about the same Marshes a great number of Owls, whereby they were shortly after delivered from the vexation of the Mice. The like of this was about that time in Kent, as Chronicles relate. What further News shall happen, you may expect an account. In the mean time,

I rest Yours,

Eugenius Anonymus.

F I N T S.

